

BALLET

TODAY

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MARCH, 1956

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA

Ballet Today

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Editor—Estelle Herf

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SVETLANA BERIOSOVA
Photo: Mike Davis

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THE first edition of BALLET TODAY came off the press in 1947, and 1956 therefore ushers in our tenth year of publication. There have, of course, been many changes in the magazine; the size and format were enlarged and improved in 1954, today it represents modern journalism at its best. The one thing which has remained static throughout the years has been the price.

I have made tremendous efforts during the past two years to keep it at one shilling, but 1956 sees a four-fold increase. Printing costs, block making, the cost of paper, and most recently the heavy increase in postage rates, have at last rendered the production of a specialist magazine at the modest price of one shilling an impossible feat.

Reluctantly therefore, with this issue, our price goes up by threepence per month. I know from readers' letters that they have noted and appreciated our efforts to give fullest value for money, and I trust that I shall continue to enjoy the loyal support of those who have stayed with us throughout the years, and the many new friends who have recently joined our ever-increasing body of readers.

To avoid confusion, subscriptions received during 1956 will remain at the usual rates.

I hope you will also continue to write and let me know what you would like to read in BALLET TODAY throughout the coming months, and I will do my best to include your suggestions.

Editor

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Publication date for the April issue of BALLET TODAY will be 22nd March. It will assist us if you will place a regular order with your newsagent or bookstall. In case of difficulty please write to us.

BACKSTAGE

A happy picture of Fonteyn and **Somes** during their short visit to Monte Carlo to dance with the Festival Ballet. They are seen with **Anton Dolin** after the performance of the *Sylvia* pas de deux.

EDUARDO and **Tani** were the specialty dancers in the new opera *Manana* by **Arthur Benjamin**, the first opera to be commissioned by the BBC Television Service, and first performed on February 1st. **Eduardo** was also responsible for the choreography and the castanets accompaniment with the orchestra. In May last year, at that time dancing with **Navarra**, **Eduardo**, seen below, gave a two-week recital at the Theatre Royal, Stratford.

THE last photograph taken of **Jon Waks** (below: seated third on left) who died suddenly in Monte Carlo whilst with Festival Ballet, of which he was a member of the corps de ballet. **John Waks** wrote an article in our November edition, thanking **Dolin** for making it possible for the dancers themselves to see the great performances of today by the inclusion of guest artists in their Company. This approach



to his art, his devotion to the Company, with whom he had worked for some years, must result in a sad loss which will be felt by all the members of the troupe.

ALICIA Markova will dance at La Scala, Milan between 24th February and 10th March.

SADLER'S Wells Theatre Ballet will include in their repertoire a new production of *Coppelia*, revised by **Ninette de Valois** on the same lines as that recently presented at Covent Garden. Decor will be by **Robert Medley**. The Company will appear at Sadler's Wells Theatre for a three-week season around June.

FESTIVAL Ballet Company on their recent visit to France returned to their hotel one night to find it almost gutted by fire.

QUOTE of the month (**Jean Coquelle**) "A certain ballet should have been called *Gourmand's Delight*, the actors expressed emotion by keeping their mouths open."

THE Children of All Nations Cavalcade of Song and Dance gave their first show at the Albert Hall during January in aid of the National Spastics Society. The producer was **Russ Hardy**. In the child star contest **Jacqueline Ward**, aged 10, was given first place for her clever impressions.

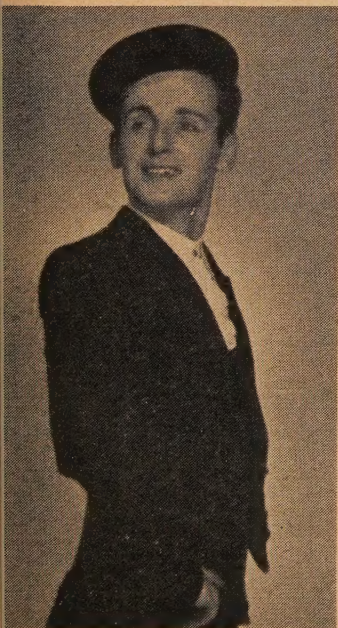
Hazel Turner was a good runner-up with the song *The Good Ship Lollipop* and **Sandra Glyn** followed with *Alice Blue Gown*. The standard of singing and dancing was extremely high, and is to be followed by a second edition with an entirely new programme at the Albert Hall on March 18th.

TERESA y Luisillo's Ballet Espanol have been receiving good press notices during their recent tour from Oklahoma City to San Diego. On January 20th they commenced a tour from Los Angeles, arriving in San Francisco to open at the Geary Theatre on January 29th.

IF you have any discarded, tight or opera hose, no matter how torn or laddered, do not throw them away. **Miss Frances Edwards** of Hilbre, Abergele Road, Rhuddlan-Rhyl, Flintshire uses them for making dolls for children in hospitals. They must be white however, and not made of wool. Please send them direct to her and not to me.

TRADE News, a weekly bulletin issued by W. H. Smith & Sons, asked thirteen leading booksellers throughout the country to forecast best-sellers for Christmas 1955. Five of them named **Lorna Hill's** new book *Return to the Wells*, and their forecast proved correct.

Photos (Top) and (Below) by **Leon Ward**



A PART from a revival of *Ballabile* most performances at Covent Garden since the present season opened have been of full-length ballets; such vehicles as *Swan Lake*, *Coppelia* and *Cinderella* have been given, generally, very impressive performances by Margot Fonteyn, Beryl Grey, Svetlana Beriosova and Violetta Elvin. With a repertory holding so many 3- and 4-act ballets it is inevitable that they will be used as "proving grounds" for ballerinas—both graduate and undergraduate.

Amongst these many excitements one occasion was of special interest, for on January 26th Anya Linden was seen in *Coppelia*, dancing the role for only the second time here (she has appeared in it a few times during the American tour, and her first essay as Swanilda occurred last Spring). So many small incidents, so many trifling accidents, can occur in a performance of any of these full-length ballets, and it is not always easy to decide whether some trifling aberration—some error of timing—a sudden lack of clean rhythm—is due to nerves, negligence or another member of the cast. The occasion last April was one of unmitigated brilliance, one of those evenings when every dancer is dead on form, the staging and lighting perfect, the partner confident and at ease; so that, at her *Coppelia* baptism, Miss Linden had every advantage working with her to sustain and illuminate her own bright talent. This was far from the case at the second attempt: not that there was anything very obvious one could point to as a fault, but it was clear that the orchestral pace, the ensembles, and some of the supporting dances did not have the sharpness, the clarity, the thrill, that we were looking for. All this simply points the fact already known—that a superb dancer cannot give her absolute utmost if circumstances conspire against her. Miss Linden has studied the role lovingly and intelligently and some small touches of characterisation have been added (to the general improvement of the role) since last year; but somehow the rest of the cast didn't project that total sympathy that the central figure must have to sustain her. Her purely lyrical movement, her gentle graces, her virtuoso dancing, seemed to be happening half the time in an emotional vacuum so far as the general stage picture was concerned.

David Blair can dance and act Franz probably as well as any living dancer; his performance on this occasion lacked that bravura we had seen before.

It is proper to add here that he had recently been indisposed and had suffered a personal bereavement only a day or so earlier: in the circumstances he danced during the whole of that week with fine discipline and selflessness.

The Pavlova Commemoration performance was an astonishing affair, simply because its general quality was so high—a rare thing in gala occasions. A big assembly of dancers (British, French, American, Indian, Scandinavian) had been brought together to offer a wide range of solos, duets, whole ballets; that so much of it fused into splendid performance was due to their determination to overcome the inescapable problems of an unfamiliar stage, a half-rehearsed orchestra, insufficient practice.

Somehow the Covent Garden contingent managed an excellent version of *Les Sylphides* (the ballet in which limited stage space was a serious impediment); the excerpts from *Homage to the*

Anya Linden.

Queen seemed rather more arid than usual, lacking their normal decor and lighting. Of the many strange offerings, Birgit Cullberg's *pas-de-deux* from *Romeo and Juliet* (Stockholm production), finely danced by Mariane Orlando and Kenneth Petersen, and the *Night Shadow* famous sleepwalking scene, by Marjorie Tallchief and George Skibine, were most moving. Toni Lander, Elsa-Marianne von Rosen, Nadia Nerina, Yvette Chauvire and Alicia Markova seemed equally determined to do fullest honour to the memory of Pavlova, by giving performances of the utmost power; their cavaliers and other male accompaniment—Alexis Rassine, Ram Gopal, Bjorn Holmgren, John Gilpin—threw themselves into their evening's work with a dash and a sincerity that were heartening to witness.

The only occasion of new work on offer has been the bill of trial ballets by a handful of striving young choreographers drawn from various groups of the

Sadler's Wells enterprises. On Sunday, January 22nd, six works were shown and it would seem ungracious to analyse in detail just to what extent nearly all of them failed as choreographic inventions. Peter Wright's comedy of a camping adventure, *Under Canvass*, was a workman-like job, using the young dancers carefully, making the most of the plot, and hitting off the bright and faintly cynical quality of Milhaud's music perfectly; the others were packed with sincerity, good intentions, confused plot, dim characterisation, and, in fact, very nearly every balletic cliché that exists . . . No use blaming the apprentice choreographers when no-one offers a system wherein they can learn the elements of their craft. These were the kind of "try-out" that should have been done in private, with a team of experts analysing, suggesting, commenting: in short, trying to help these youngsters with some sensible guidance. Don't believe anyone who says that "Choreography cannot be taught"; the craft, like the craft of painting, music, architecture, (dancing, too) has to be learned first, *before* the imaginings are let loose. When aspiring choreographers have learned the hard way how to shape a dance, when to go with and go against the music, how to make the illusion of filling or emptying the stage, what sort of plot or story is suitable and what isn't—then they are fit to offer us what they can imagine into dance-patterns. But not before.

Amongst the extraordinary influx of weighty names of the Dance world into London recently, one made a brief but notable impact on the native scene. The day after Leonide Massine had given a Press Conference (on Monday 16th.) most of the Press gave space to his comments on what goes on, and what ought to go on, in connection with his ballets.

Visiting London for the first time since 1951, he had been conducting part of his present series of negotiations for future productions at Covent Garden. No choreographer has so assiduously marketed his wares in every possible place where they might be expected to appeal. Recently he has spent much time in both Brazil and Argentina; in the former country he created a new ballet based on Baudelaire's *Hymn* and one based on a popular Brazilian childrens' tale, *Cirandas*, to music by Villa-Lobos. This latter he is anxious to see produced by the Sadler's Wells Ballet. Moving on to Buenos Aires, M. Massine revived his *Gaiete Parisienne* and *Choreartium*, the latter proving a quite sensational impact. Most



Photo: Mike Davis.

★ Lifar's Romeo and Juliet ★

★ Petit - New Works ★

contemporary balletgoers have heard of, but few have seen, good versions of any of his famous symphonic ballets of the 1930's: *Choreartium* (1933) to Brahms' Fourth Symphony was without doubt a master-work in a style which no one has yet equalled, though many have emulated. It would, in the view of many of us, be a notable achievement if it were added to the Covent Garden repertoire; it would offer a wide range of roles to many of the company's dancers; it has the kind of dramatic and lyrical qualities that few of the current works possess; and it could be—and certainly ought to be—an incentive to young choreographers to try something different. And, purely as a matter of opinion, it is quite simply one of the finest ballets made since the death of Diaghilev, by anyone, anywhere.

His activities in Europe of recent years, seem to have been mainly concentrated in Italy where he has created two distinctly different religious-subject dance-dramas: *Laudes Evangelii* and *Resurrection and Life*. The former is arranged to what is possibly the oldest existing score in Europe, an anonymous collection of airs and recitatives from the 12th century discovered in a library at Cortona; already it has been given in Italy and France and a production of it is planned as an open-air attraction this summer in Paris where it will be given on the steps of Notre-Dame.

Among recent creations are his *Fall of the house of Ussher* at Buenos Aires and a ballet almost finished which will be given at Milan late in February, *Mario il Magio*; from Milan, M. Massine moves on to Stockholm where he will revive his *Le Tricorne* and his own version of *Sacre du Printemps* (first choreographed by Nijinsky) with the original decor of Roerich.

The most promising big-scale idea he has is to take a nucleus of European—including British—dancers with him to Australia early next year, which would be strengthened by Australian dancers to form a company presenting a modern repertoire for touring in that part of the world.

He expressed regret that his ballets at Covent Garden are not occasionally re-rehearsed by himself, and made enquiries about present trends and personalities in the English scene, notably expressing an interest in the choreography of Kenneth Macmillan of whom he had heard many reports.

A. V. COTON

ON 28th December we saw at the Opera the première of *Romeo and Juliet*, Serge Prokofiev and Lavrovsky's ballet version of the story by Shakespeare.

The ballet, as it was given us at the Opera, lasts an hour and a quarter—and the score has been much cut, especially in the character and collective dances. There seems to be some rule against our being given, at the Opéra de Paris, a great ballet which would take all evening. There always have to be several ballets by different authors.

So *Romeo and Juliet*, at the Opera, is divided into two Acts and ten episodes. Georges Wakhevitch, the painter, has designed two settings, each on three levels. This Verona bears very little resemblance to the red Verona we love, but it has a certain dash about it, and the costumes are really splendid.

The crowd movements are rather static, and there could be more people on stage—so we fail to get the impression of a town disturbed by strong passions. The duel scene, on the other hand, has been treated with sober vigour. Romeo (Michel Renault, Mercutio (Raoul Bari) Paris (Jean-Paul Andréani) and Thybalt (Max Bozzoni) all did well, but especially the latter, who stamped his role with the pride and tone of a great actor. All these male rôles were full of exhausting variations, vigorous and forceful. The rôle of Juliet was intended for Nina Vyroubova, but was eventually given to the star Lyane Daydé, who acquitted herself with honour. Her slim figure and graceful beauty served to re-create our idea of the young Juliet. Beside her, Michel Renault, with his statuesque profile and his noble bearing, well represented the youth of the unfortunate hero.

The balcony scene was treated with finesse and discretion. The adagios were very fine; it is perhaps in these parts that one got nearest to Shakespeare.

Paulette Dynalix played the Nurse—a rôle which, at the Opéra, carries no sense of the comic or the buffoon. Serge Lifar kept the role of Friar Laurence for himself, and his composition was inspired by the Italian pictures of Angelico and Giotto. The great choreographer conceived his rôle in a noble—even somewhat self-effacing spirit—altogether praiseworthy.

Though this ballet was disappointing in its collective parts—lacking the sense of crowds and crowd movement—it is a success in its more intimate and passionate scenes. A great mistake has

been made in comparing the Soviet film of *Romeo and Juliet* featuring Galina Ulanova with Serge Lifar's work. Firstly, the two things are not comparable—a film is not a ballet; secondly the present aesthetic conception of the Soviet ballet at the Bolshoi, and elsewhere, differs greatly from the Western conception of the ballet—and particularly that conception which is peculiar to the Opéra de Paris—for it to be possible to establish a comparison between them.

This ballet was given an excellent reception. As for the music, one was struck by the beauty of Prokofiev's score; he is steadily establishing himself as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, composer of our time.

• • • • •

SERGE LIFAR, ballet master at the Paris Opera, has been awarded the Golden Slipper, which corresponds in choreographic art to the award of an Oscar in the Cinema world. The trophy is a golden slipper, weighing about 12 ounces, the work of Mellerio, the famous jeweller in the Rue de la Paix. Charlie Chaplin, Maurice Lehmann and other Parisian personalities awarded the Golden Slipper to Serge Lifar this year for his 25 years at the Opera, but next year what competition there will be! At the same time Lifar was created a Chevalier of the Order of French Courtesy—a Parisian institution whose object is to maintain, and make respected, the old traditions of friendliness and courtesy in human relations on national and international levels.

Paris remembers Pavlova. The Choreographic Institute of the Opéra de Paris, anxious to commemorate Pavlova on the 25th Anniversary of her death, has organised a committee to consider the fixing of a plaque on the Théâtre du Châtelet, where she appeared for the first time in Paris, in 1909, with Serge de Diaghilev's company. On the same occasion, an annual *Anna Pavlova* prize will be created, and awarded to a brilliant young dancer. A commemorative medal will be struck, and the commemoration will be completed by an exhibition at the Opera Library.

Roland Petit recently staged a new ballet spectacle at the Theatre des Champs Elysées; the programme comprised two of his former successes—*The Wolf* and *Mourning in 24 Hours*, and two new pieces for which he created the choreography, *La Chambre*—taken from a plot by Georges Simenon the celebrated author of detective novels, with decor by Bernard Buffet, music by Georges Auric—and *Les Belles Damnées*, decor by Tom Keogh, music by Michel Legrand on themes by Jean Michel Damase.

La Chambre is a completely realistic ballet. At the beginning one sees the dying moments of a murdered man; a woman enters and discovers him. The police arrive, and an Inspector shuts himself in the room to reconstruct the drama; he sees it in all its horror, as though he had been an actor in it. A woman enters, and there is a rather brutal love scene, after which she kills the man. The ballet ends as it began, by the man's dying convulsions and the discovery of his corpse.

This ballet has in it much more of the pantomime than the dance, and is very reminiscent of *Jeune Homme et la Mort*, without the fantastic and poetic strain which runs through that work. The Yugoslav dancer Veronika Mlakar played the role of the murderess, and the American Buzz Miller that of the victim; neither of them created a sensation. Auric's music was strong and sustained, and Buffet's settings had great pictorial quality.

Les Belles Damnées, a choreographic tableau, whose scene is set in Hades, with fantastic demons and the condemned female souls in their shifts, reminds one of *L'Oeuf a la Coque*, but without its finesse and spirituality. The young dancer Tessa Beaumont plays the principal role without much brilliance, partnered by Buzz Miller.

The real success of this show is undoubtedly *The Wolf*, with Violette Verdy. Back from Milan, where she created Prokofiev's *Cinderella* at La Scala, she seemed a greater artist than ever; sensitive, passionate, vibrant, she expresses all the nuances of her complex and difficult role in every movement of her body. Roland Petit shared her success; in fact, one can imagine no other dancer in this rôle.

Helene Constantine and José Ferran brilliantly revived the rôles formerly played by Colette Marchand and Serge Perrault in *Deuil en 24 Heures*.

FERDINAND REYNA



LETTRE DE PARIS

WITHOUT looking into a crystal ball or consulting the stars, anyone could have predicted that Lifar's production of *Romeo and Juliet* (Paris Opera, Dec. 28) would be a flop. What was surprising was the volte-face among critics who in the past had been Lifar's most faithful supporters.

The most complete volte-face—and the most damaging to Lifar—was that of Olivier Merlin, writing in the influential evening paper *Le Monde*. He described the production as being in no way comparable to the Russian one seen in the film; the decor, with its Gothic arches and acid colours, was quite unsuitable for Verona; the Choreography failed to bring out any of the violent dramatic reversals which abound in the play and the Russian production; the series of tableaux formed by the corps de ballet lacked coherence, and when they started to move they did almost anything; the duel scene was totally ineffective; Lifar as Friar Lawrence was ridiculous; and so on. He found a few things to praise (such as Michel Renault's dancing in the part of Romeo) but on the whole his analysis was crushing; and he went out of his way to attack the

behaviour of the familiar clique: his last sentence was "Fourteen curtain calls—four of them genuine."

There were a fair number of journalists who turned in the adulatory reviews familiar at every Lifar première, but the opinions I heard expressed in the corridors were even more severe than those of Merlin.

Though *Roméo et Juliette* was in fact no worse than a good many of its predecessors, it made a lamentable impression in Paris just because critics and the public for once had some real standards of comparison: instead of comparing Lifar with Lifar, they compared him with Shakespeare, Prokofieff and Lavrovsky. Lifar was playing for high stakes when he decided on this production. His position had been weakened to some extent by the criticisms of his ballets and his dancing in English journals when the Opéra visited London. If such an ambitious production as *Roméo et Juliette* had been a success, Lifar would have regained all that he had lost. In fact, however, he lost his gamble; and it remains to be seen what will be the repercussions.

What shocked me most about Lifar's production was his treat-

ment of the music. He made enormous cuts to reduce the ballet from 3 hours to 1½ hours, but did this without careful attention to the action, so that at times the music ran counter to the choreography. No less distressing was the way in which he put together his favourite virtuoso steps (such as *tours en l'air*) without any regard for characterisation or for the rhythm, phrasing, orchestration and even the tempo of the music. On a number of occasions he seemed to give up trying to find any movements to fill up the music, padding out the ballet with his over-familiar clichés of gesture (and even calling on the clichés of Massine at times.) In spite of the severe cuts, some critics found the ballet too long: in fact the choreography was barely sufficient for a half-hour ballet.

BORIS KNIASEFF

It was a great pleasure to meet Boris Kniasseff in Paris, on holiday from his school in Geneva. This great teacher made a name for himself in Paris as "the teacher of the stars" long before he went to Geneva; but in Geneva he has perfected a revolutionary new type of barre-work which

has enabled him to get results far more quickly and surely.

In fact his enormous classroom in Geneva has no barre: he gives all the barre exercises (and some new ones which he has invented) with the pupils lying on the ground on sheets of plastic material. I was fortunate enough to be able to watch his classes when I went to Geneva on tour (as stage director) with the Imperial Ballet of Japan. At first I was anxious and a bit shocked: our classical technique has been perfected by one great teacher after another for hundreds of years, and it is hard to imagine that any violent innovation can do anything but harm. Nevertheless the proof of the pudding is the eating: when Boris Kniasseff's pupils got up from the floor to do their centre work, I was able to see a quite remarkable perfection of line and control of placing.

The *raison d'être* of this new system is that it avoids fatigue. The dancer on the floor does not use any strength for balancing or for raising a leg against the pull of gravity; instead, he or she concentrates on obtaining perfect turn-out, pointed toes, etc., and is helped to keep these positions by



another pupil who holds the leg on the ground in its proper position. In this way the dancer learns from the start what it feels like to do things properly; and the results are really exciting. After a "barre" lasting an hour or more the pupils are fresh as a daisy, and attack the centre work with élan: only those who took Boris Kniaeff's pre-Geneva classes (with their exceptionally exhausting barres) can fully appreciate the joy of this.

SITARA IN PARIS

When Sitara danced at the Musée Guimet in December, Mme Juillerat (who directs these recitals) asked Sitara to begin with some demonstrations of technique, as is usual at the Guimet. In this way audiences were fortunate in seeing some aspects of Kathak dramatic expression never before seen in the West. Her three performances had great success in Paris: with its spontaneity and its unique combination of naturalness and sophistication her Lucknowi Kathak opened up a new world of Hindu dancing, quite different from anything people had expected from their knowledge of South Indian dancing.

The talented critic Maurice Pourchet devoted three long columns of lyrical prose to Sitara in the new theatrical magazine *Le Strapontin*. Here is a literal translation of one paragraph:

"And since Sitara Devi had begun by her usual beginning, which is to draw into herself the audience—while standing motionless—putting all her energy into fascinating the spectators with her look, sometimes of velvet and sometimes of fire . . . since the sun of the Himalayas had given a golden tinge to her young face with its pure oval, without in any way damaging its freshness . . . since her small body is deliciously rounded . . . let her laugh, weep, leap, fall, get up, tremble, play with the sliding of her head on her neck, hammer or caress the ground with her feet . . . and give us the eye on occasion with an equal conviction and a constant grace, much austerity or ingratitude would be needed to write that she danced without giving exquisite pleasure."

I find this both accurate and admirable: I only wish one could write like this in English! Unfortunately such lyricism goes very badly into 20th-century English prose: unless, of course, the writer is Welsh or Irish.

FERNAU HALL

MONTE CARLO GALA

THE National Fête of the Principality of Monaco is a day given to ceremony and rejoicing. But to those fortunate enough to receive invitations, undoubtedly the 'high light' of the Fête is the Gala offered to the guests of the Sovereign Prince in the Salle Garnier at the Casino. Uniform or tail coats, orders and decorations are 'de rigueur' for the men and call for a corresponding effort from the ladies.

It is no secret that Rainer III

is a lover of Ballet and that he is largely concerned in the selection of the Gala programme. But even the most hopeful balletomane was this year surprised and delighted to find three ballet items among the five offered.

After the reception of the Prince by the playing of the lively Monegasque anthem, the curtain rose to the Ballet Divertissement *Rouge et Blanc*, with music by Jean-Philippe Rameau and choreography and costumes by Marika Besobrasova, of the Monte Carlo Ballet School. The Corps de Ballet was formed by

students from the School, ranging from tiny tots to dancers already starting their professional careers. Irène Skorik, Hélène Armfelt and Gérard Ohn also took part, contributing a pas de deux and two solo items, and also dancing with the Corps de Ballet. *La Poule*, with Hélène Armfelt as the hen protecting her chicks, was charmingly danced by senior students. This ambitious and somewhat lengthy opening of the programme was beautifully staged but some questioned the 'mélange' of professional dancers and young pupils.

(contd. on next page)

Opposite Page (top)

Taken at the studio of Boris Kniaeff in Geneva.

Opposite Page (bottom)

Sitara Devi.

Below

Claude Bessy and Max Bozzoni in *Terrain Vague* presented at the Monte Carlo Gala.

Photo: Robert Oggero.



MONTE CARLO GALA

(contd. from page 7)

The next ballet number was the *Pas de Deux* from the *Nutcracker*, danced to perfection by Claude Bessy and Max Bozzoni, both from the Paris Opera Ballet.

After the interval came the modern ballet *Terrain Vague*, music by Richard Blareau, present chef d'orchestre of the Monte Carlo Orchestra, with choreography by Françoise Adret, who came from Amsterdam, bringing some dancers from that centre to take part.

The curtain rose on a squalid tract of waste land, with towering chimneys and factory buildings in the background. A solitary individual with a trumpet is perched on a mound of rubble. The characters lounge on to the stage—the flashy young girl, the workman, the tough, the down-and-outs, the drunken slut. The workman, Max Bozzoni, and the tough, Chris Torenbosch, quarrel over the girl, Claude Bessy. The slut feels impelled to dance and staggers among the amused onlookers. This difficult rôle was beautifully danced by Antoinette Boncenne. The policeman now arrives, but is deterred by the threatening attitude of the roughs and retires discomfited. Four impudent children, led by Carla Lipp, dance in contempt of the law. A chauffeur, laden with parcels, followed by the lady and the maid seem somewhat lost among the hurly-burly. Finally the girl chooses the workman and they dance a *pas de deux* of reconciliation. This gave full scope to Claude Bessy, lovely as the pert gamine and Max Bozzoni formidable in blue jeans.

Terrain Vague, played in Monte Carlo for the first time last January, was received with enthusiastic applause. The music is effective, particularly the trumpet on the stage, finely played by Jean-Baptiste Dolla of the Monte Carlo Orchestra. Though essentially modern, this ballet should not offend the older generation, for there is no crude miming. There are moments of pathos and real beauty, particularly in the final *pas de deux*. The decor and costumes, by Yves Bonnat, were excellent.

The pleasure of the evening was much enhanced by the masterly handling of the famous Monte Carlo Orchestra by Richard Blareau. This very talented conductor and composer has rapidly attained a considerable reputation in this highly critical centre. It is to be hoped that his many pre-occupations will not prevent the composition of music for another ballet.

J. R. FARRINGTON

BALLET RAMBERT IN ITALY

FOR the first time Madame Rambert has brought her company to delight Venice with five performances at the Fenice. These were given to ever increasing and enthusiastic audiences.

Persephone was the first ballet performed, and is in two scenes, the first depicting Persephone's temptation and fall, the second her sojourn in Hades with Pluto. Unfortunately the formal, evenly metred music in the first part, by reason of its sameness of mood, is not well suited to the unfolding of this drama. There is no change whatever at the crucial moment when Persephone picks the fatal flower, indeed, were it not for the programme note the significance of her action would be lost. She remained apparently unruffled, even when the dark veil had enveloped her, and it was not until some time later than one felt aught was amiss.

In the second scene however the work recovers and becomes a beautiful portrayal of Pluto's love for Persephone, expressed as much by its tenderness as by the unearthly atmosphere that informs it.

Noreen Sopwith as Persephone danced with the lightness of Titania in the first part, and with becoming gravity of mien in the second. Gillian Martlew as Demetria at first gave the impression of a friend rather than a mother, but her entry in the second scene was full of dignity, and deepest concern. Alexander Bennett as Pluto had a certain sadness—just a touch of the sadness of Lucifer, which at once revealed consummate artistry. His lifts appeared as if done by magic, Persephone floating to his shoulder with the merest touch of his hands.

Les Sylphides. When the curtain rose on the famous opening tableau set against Hugh Stevenson's exquisite back-drop, it was as when one suddenly senses the arrival of spring on a moonlit night. The beauty of the grouping was ineffable. The opinion was expressed here that the corps de ballet in *Sylphides* was so good that it was almost impossible to distinguish between them and the principals, and that is true. Once again the incomparable freshness and purity of the English school of dancing (of which Madame Rambert was the foundress) was brought into high relief, so very different from the flashy exhibitionism sometimes seen elsewhere.

Ann Horn in the prelude immediately set the nostalgic mood of the piece, reminiscent of the paintings of Watteau. In the waltz Noreen Sopwith barely

skimmed the boards with her twinkling joyous feet, whilst Beryl Goldwyn, in the mazurka and grande valse, reached those heights of pure romantic lyricism attained only by the few. There is never the slightest hesitation, no suspicion of any difficulty, and always the feeling of something held in reserve. She was supported by Alexander Bennett, whose lightness and grace, and charming self-effacing partnering maintained the high tradition of the danseur noble. I thought the pauses between the dances were a fraction too long; another moment and the continuity would have been broken.

The placing of *Variations on a Theme* immediately after *Sylphides* constituted a brutal stroke of genius, a grim contrast indeed. But for this device of introducing a brilliant contrasting episode of the young men deceived by the worthless, glittering and false short cuts to happiness—this symbol of life anywhere after the war would be almost too harrowing. Yet real happiness, despite the vicissitudes of modern life, is shown to be somehow attainable—in that beautiful moment at the end of the work, when the young man and his love are reunited over the prostrate forms of their fellow-sufferers, and step forth together.

Ronald Yerrell as the young man presents a vivid picture of bewilderment, defiance in the face of adversity, and determination to win through. His miming is powerful and intensely dramatic, perfectly suited to the rôle. Noreen Sopwith as his love is well contrasted, gentle and steadfast in the quest for her lover.

Miming predominates in this ballet, of course, but is relieved by the grotesque divertissement of the witch and her spurious creations, danced respectively by Alison Norwood, Patricia Ashworth, Selena Wylie, Beryl Goldwyn and Ann Horn, the latter in the brilliantly devised duo of the woman and her shadow. Kenneth Rowell's striking backdrop of a ruined city expresses the grim atmosphere to perfection.

Gala Performance on this occasion was given with far less exaggeration than when Ballet Theatre gave it here, so much so that the satire might almost have been mistaken for reality. Beryl Goldwyn as the Russian, and Gillian Martlew as the Italian, ballerina, might give a little more point to the respective characteristics of each country's style of dancing. It was difficult at times to identify them, but Selma Siegertsz as the French ballerina left no doubt as to where she came from, and her every moment

sparkled with coquettish élan. Norman Dixon, John Chesworth and Mario de Marigny danced with distinction and elegance. The collision between two of them appeared to be a real faux pas, so perfectly was it timed.

The second series, given on the last two days, began with *Peter and the Wolf*. This was a very happy choice because, owing to the text being given in Italian (by Giammi Raccanelli) the audience was put into a receptive state of mind from the start and, what's more, remained in it.

After a repetition of *Sylphides* the curtain rose on *Laidrette*, in my opinion a masterpiece. The music of this strange, haunting work is by the Swiss composer, Frank Martin, and consists of a concerto unusual for having three solo instruments—pianoforte, harp and harpsichord, accompanied by full orchestra. The choreography by Kenneth Macmillan, decors and costumes by Kenneth Rowell, combine with the music in the creation of a dreamlike fantasy that contrasts vividly the sad, cold misery of the strolling players with the superficial gaiety of the rich. These players, pierrots most of them, spring directly to life from Tiepolo's frescoes and Watteau's "Gilles". The vendor of masks, a sinister figure, is presented in full head-mask completely disguising the dancer, Alison Norwood, so that it is impossible to tell, such is the miming, that the rôle is taken by a girl.

After the presentation and highly stylized and staccato dancing by the guests, *Laidrette* (Pierrot's daughter) danced by Patricia Ashworth, expresses her gratitude to the young host, her relief at escaping from her wretched companions, her revulsion from the hard life she leads, in an unsupported solo lasting three-and-a-half minutes. This, for sheer originality of conception, and brilliance of execution, I have never seen equalled. To the arrestingly weird and fantastic music of the three solo instruments, this *pas seul* develops into a succession of never-ending surprises of movement and gesture, so virile and violent at times that the dancer gives the impression of some wild, begrieved creature akin to Cassio in *I Pagliacci*. Without a moment's pause she is joined by the young host, Ronald Yerrell, and dances with him a *pas de deux* expressive of their too sudden infatuation and through it all runs the underlying current of sadness in the music.

The rich people return, they unmask, and at length poor little *Laidrette* is compelled to

the World

do likewise. The shocking and totally unexpected dénouement, for the sake of those who have not yet seen this amazing work, I leave undisclosed.

Ronald Yerrell and Patricia Ashworth are perfectly suited to these roles. The one ardent and impressionable, the other fantastic and yet so loving. The blending of these different personalities creates an unforgettable stage picture, and moreover gives the greatest promise of success whenever this excellent pair dance together.

Colin Kingsley, the Company's pianist, must be congratulated on his splendid playing of the pianoforte part in the concerto, and Kenneth Rowell again for the lovely dresses worn by the guests. Unfortunately the intricate and very beautiful details of these dresses cannot be properly appreciated at a distance.

Owing to the temporary indisposition of Joseph Vandenoot, the Company's Conductor, *Winter Night* was only given at the last performance, but it came at just the right moment. A change had come over the public by now, no longer lukewarm, its enthusiasm was mounting at each performance, and now, at the end, came something all Italians love—the complete revelation of an artist's feelings at their most impassioned.

The choreography is neither particularly distinguished nor sufficiently varied, yet it does give infinite scope for a ballerina (in the role of the frustrated lover) to develop an ever-rising tide of passion, hate and despair. All this was expressed superbly by Ann Horn with more and more force, to such an extent, indeed, that at the end she was completely exhausted. A triumph, undoubtedly, but this young artist must look after herself and learn to husband her resources. No dancer can afford to let herself be extended to the point of collapse, if she wishes to build up a career. In this role the Ballerina is on stage the whole time and has scarcely any rest. It is therefore a part demanding careful study in the art of concealed relaxation.

Noreen Sopwith was a perfect foil as the young girl, and expressed delicately a suitable gradation of rising passion. Her pose, whilst sitting disconsolate, was a refreshing momentary contrast in the choreography. Alexander Bennett was again the perfect lover, and betrayed the gradual change in his affections with subtle gestures of the hands as well as in his expression. His effortless grace of movement matches his poetic demeanour in everything he portrays.

Colin Kingsley played the concerto brilliantly, and the general playing by the Fenice Orchestra, despite the very great handicap of having different conductors and little time for extra rehearsal, was of its usual high standard.

Robert Paterson

Variations on a Theme:

This new photograph of the Ballet Rambert taken in Perugia during the Italian tour, shews from left to right: Marcia Walden, Valerie Marsh, Gillian Martlew, Alison Norwood and prone figure—Ronald Yerrell. In the Venice performance Ronald Yerrell took the principal male role, and not that of the prone figure.

Photo : Stampa.



JOHN FIELD has a double claim to the title Man of Ballet. Not only has he found fame as a dancer at a period when the Opera House is equipped to the point of being almost overstocked with talent, but when on January 1st this year he took up his new appointment as director of the Theatre Ballet he broke the established tradition of petticoat influence over the destiny of the Wells Organization. This does not mean his retirement as a dancer. He means to produce his favourite ballet *Giselle* for the junior company and will certainly dance in it, with one of the ballerinas from the senior company in the title role. As he himself will occasionally return to Covent Garden as a dancer, this year may see a closer and more fluid relationship between the two companies.

Both remain, of course under the artistic direction of de Valois, and while no one will deny that Miss Van Praagh has done some fine work with the Theatre Ballet, John Field is possessed of too much enthusiasm for his new post, for his regime to be uneventful.

He was born in Doncaster and true to the tradition of Yorkshire he places great emphasis on hard work as the key to success. He first studied with Shelagh Elliott-Clarke and Edna Slocome in Liverpool where he made his debut with the local ballet club. In 1941 he joined Sadler's Wells and almost immediately danced solos. From 1942 to 1945 he was away on war service but on his return he took over principal roles.

Incidentally, one of the most startling transformation scenes the theatre offers today, must be the drop of the final curtain which transforms John Field the ideal romantic cavalier, into the figure who with his slightly receding hair, and humorously twinkling eyes, hidden behind enigmatic

heavy horn rimmed spectacles, could pass for one of the many successful business men of his native county.

He is a believer in attention to detail. An example of this is his careful study of all press reports pertaining to dancing which results in a merciless condemnation of journalistic inaccuracy. He blames the reticence of many dancers for the eagerness of the national press to swoop on irrelevant personal details, but finds the prevalence of books and periodicals on ballet a most encouraging sign "It was not so before the war" he says "all we had then, was an occasional volume by Arnold Haskell".

John Field regards the war as the beginning of improved standards of male dancing. "Prior to 1939, the only British danseur, with a highly developed technique was Harold Turner. Although a whole generation of dancers were lost because of war service and others did not return to the profession at the cessation of hostilities, the war brought ballet to audiences who would previously never have thought it held anything for them. Ballet provided escapism. Tapping these new sources opened up the possibility of dancing as a career to many who might previously never have considered it. It is a fact that more boys are now taking dancing classes than ever before and the Sadler's Wells Ballet now boasts thirty male dancers all of a high technical standard."

Asked if it were easier for male dancers to get to the top of the profession John Field said "So far as the Sadler's Wells school was concerned, no. The standards are identical, but as the school accepts only the cream of both sexes the proportion of female rejects is higher because more unlikely candidates apply".

He believes the system whereby senior students can appear with

the company, thus gaining stage experience and at the same time have an opportunity of watching the best dancers at work, helps all-round standards immeasurably. "A good example of this, is the fact that last summer, even in the absence of most of its ballerinas, the Sadler's Wells company was still attracting and satisfying large audiences."

John Field does not subscribe to the theory of those who feel the ballet boom of 1946-1951 must be followed by a corresponding slump in attendance. "If such a depression ever occurred", he states "then I think we have successfully passed through it, but personally I think such things are merely exaggerated reports of the seasonal fluctuations felt throughout the entertainment industry".

For training, John Field believes in the Volinine system "which is unusual in its emphasis on stretching movements and a good deal tougher than other methods". He worked with Volinine for several months and now teaches the system in the Wells Organization.

The man who has often been Fonteyn's other self in *Tiresias*, as well as partnering most of our other favourites says "A ballerina is fundamentally doing a job, just like everyone else, and a dedicated artist does not waste energy on tantrums. They are only for the second-rate. He feels very strongly on the subject of partnering. "In this subtle blending of the two elements of the dance, lies the quintessence of the art".

"Classical variations should not be viewed or danced as if dancer and danseuse were engaged in a contest to dazzle the audience by the performance of technically difficult feats, they should be assessed as the introduction and preliminary to the pas de deux, which is the highest form of choreographic inven-

tion." He believes that a pas de deux brings out the best in both dancers, because they feel bad work lets down the team, but points out the difficulty of the corps de ballet dancer who changes his partner almost every night and has to adjust himself, "for every girl makes her turns in a slightly different way".

While retaining a personal loyalty to the classics, he says "If I did not like modern ballet, I would be of little use to the Theatre Ballet who are young and adventurous". Nevertheless, thinking wishfully, he would like to extend their *Swan Lake, Act II* to a full version.

The future development of ballet in general, he sees as a marriage between the classical style and the modern expressive use of every part of the body, as exemplified in the work of Macmillan, whom he believes to be the dynastic successor to Ashton. He holds out little hope for the purely abstract ballet, although *Symphonic Variations* is a personal favourite of his. "Even twenty minutes of this type of ballet becomes an endurance test, not only for dancers but for the concentration of the audience, and therefore a loose thread of narrative linking the divertissements is preferable.

John Field also thinks that classical mime will soon be extinct, because "so few of the audience understand more than the most obvious gestures". To this statement he makes an honourable exception for the Covent Garden gallery. "They understand it quite as well, and sometimes I suspect better, than the dancers" he remarked.

And what does the new director think of when he is not thinking about his work, was my final question "But I never stop thinking about it" came the prompt reply, although he finally admitted enjoying a quiet afternoon at the cinema.

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BACKSTAGE CAMERA



JOHN FIELD

with

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA

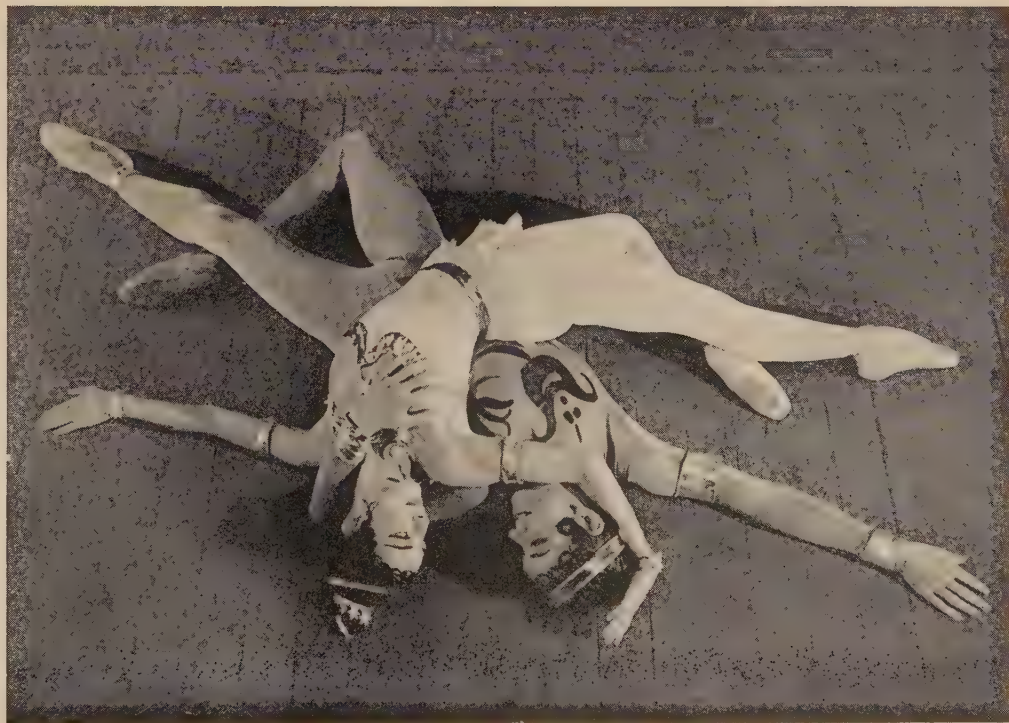
(top left)

BERYL GREY

(top right)

MARGOT FONTEYN

(right)



The Dying Swan





Pavlova first created this role after hearing Saint-Saens' music The Swan.

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ALICIA MARKOVA

dancing this role in honour of Pavlova.

More photographs commemorating the 25th Anniversary of Pavlova's death will be published next month.





Above :— Beatrice Consuelo

WILLIAM Magnin, one of the principal producers in French Television, has just finished two dance films with the collaboration of Jean Corelli, the young Spanish ballet master; Beatrice Consuelo, Olga Makcheeva and Daniel Seillier (all from the de Cuevas ballet) were engaged for the occasion. The subjects of these two films, which are intended for young viewers, are *The Blue Bird* and a fragment from *Gayaneh*. In future films in this series Jean Corelli himself will dance, and he will call in the young dancer Genevieve Creusat.

Top Right :—

MARY Ellen Moylan and Oleg Briansky in *Soirée* at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York.

Right :—

MAINA Gielgud niece of Sir John, is organising a children's Ballet matinée at the Fortune Theatre during February in aid of Dr. Barnardo's Home (see Ballet Diary on page 18). At ten years of age, Miss Gielgud must surely be the youngest organiser ever.

Photo : S. Kumon



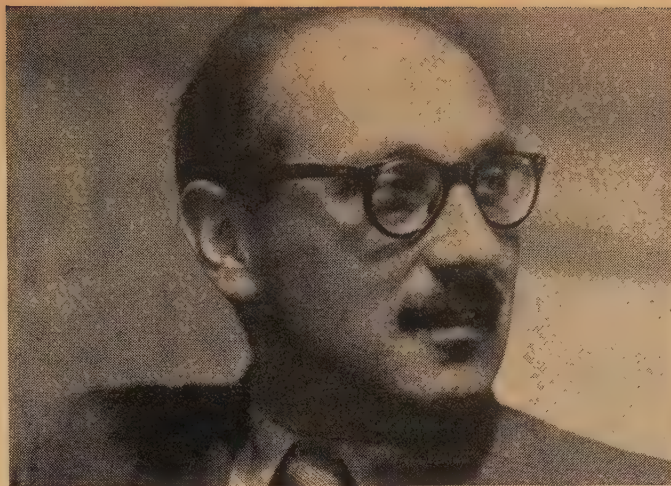
Musician at the Ballet

GROWING UP

BALLET is now a fully grown child of the arts. If it is to become a healthy adult entertainment the rigid ties with its classical birth must be shaken off. Occasional performances of *Le Lac des Cygnes* or *Les Sylphides* give pleasure if the orchestral playing is full of vitality and the dancing stylish and enthusiastic. But both musicians and dancers need the revitalising serum of new ballets if staleness is not to set in. Otherwise these masterpieces of the past deteriorate into museum exhibits. Ballet may be an art form but it is primarily a living entertainment.

Because of this, I welcome a programme given on a recent Sunday by The Sadler's Wells Choreographic Group at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. These working members of the ballet world showed affection for their medium by toiling away on their day of rest in order to revitalise the labour of their love.

Most of these choreographers left the current trend of narrating a story for hazardous attempts to expound ideas and describe emotions. Though ballet is an ideal medium for expressing the intangible facets of emotion, it has to be successfully married to the correct musical idiom to



be effective. Consequently the choreographer seeking a musical partner for the balletic marriage of dance and sound must be careful to select the right one.

On that particular Sunday some of the Group's choreographers were unsuccessful in their choice of music. Lennox Berkeley's *Divertimento* failed to suggest the colours of the spectrum for *Spectroscope* (Terry Gilbert's ballet). And though Moussorgsky's *A Night On The Bare Mountain* is lively music, it did not convey the powers of good and evil, and Judy Lardman's *All Hallow's Eve* failed on that account. For *Valete* Anthony Sweeney used the Sibelius piece *Ponjola's Daughter*, but the music itself could not save his day.

Happier marriages were recorded by the two choreographers Wright and Hunt. Peter Wright had a vivacious partner for his *Under Canvas* in Darius Milhaud's *Suite Française*. Its blend of humour and pathos assisted the dancers to show us the action and thoughts of the people in a small holiday camp. One telling passage particularly blended music and dance when the young child is left alone and sees the loving couples go to the tents. Here the music immediately created the mood, while the dancer (Elsa Recagno) filled in the necessary visual pathos.

In *Cafe Dansant*, again the music was a suitable balance of liveliness and drama. Aaron Copland's breezy syncopation and New Orleans tang in

by
MONTAGUE GALMAN

Music For The Theatre gave the choreographer Wish Mary Hunt a balletic tonic and earned her the evening's cheers from the audience.

WELDON WELCOMED

If dancers need new choreography to keep their freshness, orchestral musicians must have frequent changes in conductors if they are to give of their liveliest. A new personality welding a baton will project enthusiasm to revive the flagging interests of the players.

After my agitation for more ballet conductors at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, I was glad to hear they had made some changes. Robert Irving is a good musician but he has been tackling far too much lately. He now is the Musical Adviser, and George Weldon, a fine musician, is the Principal Conductor. Though Weldon can handle a symphony in a concert hall, he is a beginner in the ballet world. In the Royal Opera House orchestral pit he obtains beautifully shaped musical phrases from the orchestra, but stylishly moulded pieces of music do not help the dancer if the essential tempo is alien to the dance movements.

Weldon must lift his nose out of the score and give more attention to the stage, otherwise I foresee endless trouble between the conductor and the dancers.

HOMAGE TO PAVLOVA

NEW RECORDS

REVIEWED BY B.C.

ON the 23rd January twenty-five years ago, Anna Pavlova died. No other dancer has done so much for ballet by her own great art and by her amazing tours covering one end of the world to the other. To bring back those enchanted memories for those of us who were so fortunate as to have seen her, HMV have brought out *Hommage to Pavlova* on ALP 1301. It includes several of her ballets, such as *Autumn Leaves*, *Gavotte Pavlova* and of course *The Dying Swan*, and under the baton of Efrem Kurtz who, in the last few years, was her Musical Director.

An interesting record from Ducretet-Thomson, London DTL 93010, is Falla's *Love the Magician* and *Master Peter's Puppet Show*. The former is complete instead of just the *Ritual Fire Dance*, and was one of Pilar Lopez' main items. The latter, appearing for the first time on LP, is an opera-ballet-puppet show commissioned by Princesse de Polignac for her private theatre. Jaime Pahissa gives interesting detail about it

in his book, *Manuel de Falla*, reviewed August, 1954. I found this disc most intriguing.

It is difficult to know which *Thamar* to recommend now that Columbia have added another excellent one, 33CX1280, to the three I have already reviewed. It means that you may have to sacrifice your favourite conductor or orchestra for the coupling that gives the greatest scope to your collection. The present one includes Casella's orchestration of *Islamey*, also by Balakirev, which is said to be a forerunner of *Thamar*. Fokine used it in his ballet for Diaghilev. The third item is the symphonic poem, *Russia*, and all three are very well recorded.

For those who are looking for the Suites from *The Love of the Three Oranges* and from *The Nutcracker*, Malko on HMV. CLP 1060, will not disappoint them. His performance is full of life and feeling—you will recognise Prokofiev's march which is included in *Cinderella*.

A suite of Lully's ballet music on Columbia 33CX1277, is pleasant enough though I did

not enjoy it as much as I expected. Nevertheless that is but my personal reaction as the playing is good. The Cimarosa *Oboe Concerto*, an arrangement of Benjamin's, is a gay and happy little work which I find most engaging but you must not expect an oboist of Leon Goossen's standard. Arnold Spohr built his ballet, *Intermede*, round it for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

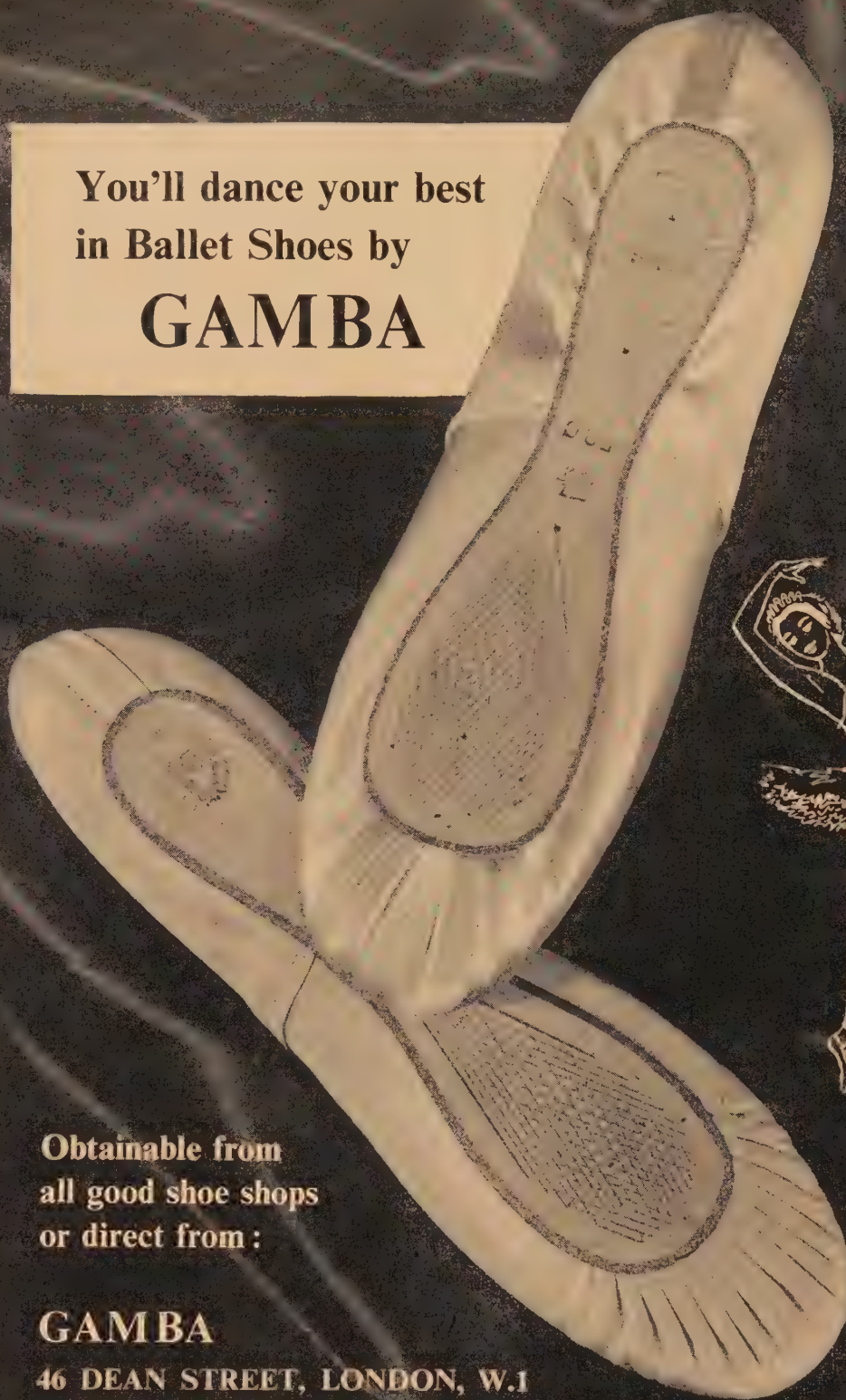
I am pleased to include a record of Vivaldi's *The Seasons*, HMV. ALP 1234, as it was the Spring and Winter movements that Robert Joffrey, the young American choreographer, used when he staged *Persephone* for the Ballet Rambert last summer. If you are a new-comer to Vivaldi's music, I think you will find this a good introduction and it is well played by the Virtuosi di Roma.

If you are still wondering what Beecham's encore was at the Festival Hall on Sibelius' 90th birthday, play the second side of Philips ABR 4045. He gives the answer himself in a superlative rendering of the inci-

dental music for *The Tempest*. Excerpts with other works of Sibelius, formed the score of Gore's dramatic and controversial ballet, *Antonia*. You will not regret buying this record. The Polovtsian dances from *Prince Igor*, Philips NBL 5015, I found not so satisfactory. Mitropoulos' conducting seemed to lack the fire and vitality that is so essential.

Here are four good 45 rpm recordings with which to end. A spritely performance of excerpts from *Mam'zelle Angot*, HMV. 7EP7020—the first, I think, on record of this gay ballet; the pas de six and the Act II pas de deux, Columbia SEL 1537, from Karajan's fine rendering of *Swan Lake*; four items from Elgar's *Nursery Suite* Columbia SED 5527, delicately treated by Collingwood—you will remember it as one of de Valois' early ballets and finally the waltz from Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*, Philips NBE 11006, which both Charrat and Balanchine have used. It has an attractive coupling of Dvorak's *Notturmo* and Grieg's *Im Volkston*.

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Flamenco

Dancing and Dancers

By David Benn

PART TWO



FLAMENCO is certainly not European in origin. Yet, no matter how far back we go in the literature of Spain, and indeed Europe, we find the traditional songs and dances of Andalusia accepted as an established part of village life. From these the gypsy, with his own songs and dances, seems to have kept apart. The history of his art is one of a struggle to keep it alive against the united efforts of Church and State to suppress it.

Danced by labourers in the evenings and by the servants after the rest of the household had retired, both classes of people doubtless gypsy in origin, these dances were frowned upon by the educated Spaniard because of their sensuous nature and the lewd songs which accompanied them. It was essentially the entertainment of the uneducated classes.

Of course, the Spanish noble and his family could not have kept entirely apart. We read of them watching these dances from their windows or from their coaches, doubtless outwardly registering disgust and inwardly half regretting their social status. We even know of one Spanish family who devised a means of watching their servants dance without them knowing it.

Nevertheless the sensuous element eventually got so far out of hand that even lovers of this art were frankly disgusted and finally the State felt itself forced to take action. The first news we have of this action is in a decree dated August 3rd, 1583. "The Lords of His Majesty's court order that no person should dare to sing or say, in the streets or in their homes, the song commonly known as Zarabanda (the most popular song and dance of that time) nor any other similar on pain of two hundred lashes; and for men six years in the galleys and for women banishment from the kingdom! Although the dance is not mentioned we can be certain that the dance was forbidden as well. The song and the dance were at that time quite inseparable. About that time the use of the traditional gypsy costume was also forbidden.

So flamenco went underground. The Zarabanda was still danced in houses and in the servants' quarters, their masters either knowing nothing or, what is more likely, choosing to ignore it. The ban was certainly ineffective for the next official record we have of the Zarabanda is in 1618 when we read of it being performed in a comedy at the court of Philip III. At the end of the seventeenth century Mme. D'Aubnoy, a French visitor to the Spanish court, wrote in these words "Those who dance the Zarabanda hardly seem to move, so nimbly do they glide. Their manner of dancing is quite different from ours, for they give great importance to the movements of their arms which curl through the air with an enchanting grace."

The Zarabanda has faded into disuse. The last we hear of it is in 1847 when it was danced by a team of gypsies at an Andalusian fair. From the many descriptions of it, however, we can be sure that most of the modern flamenco dances, from the wild Zapateado with which Antonio won over the British public, to the pulsating Polo which is one of the highlights of Pilar Lopez's programme, have their roots in the historic Zarabanda.

The next two centuries were turbulent ones for Spain. Where the Spanish Empire was not crumbling it was becoming a millstone round the neck of the mother country. France constituted a continual menace. Economic ruin seemed almost daily nearer. People had little time or inclination for the traditional art of their country. The exotic songs and dances of Andalusia again became the exclusive property of the lower classes—particularly the gypsies. The gypsies were regarded as parasites, which they undoubtedly were, and their dances as a sensuous form of entertainment frowned upon by the Church, and found disgusting even by many of those who were struggling to keep alive the traditions of their country in the face of the drastic changes through which it was being forced.

By the 19th Century Spain was but a shadow of the great power she had once been. Spanish culture was at its lowest ebb and even

many of her own authors scorned Spanish styles and ideas in favour of the French ones which had spread through Spain, especially after Napoleon had placed a Bonaparte on the Spanish throne. Spanish gentlewomen even preferred to dress in French style.

To the intensely patriotic ordinary Spanish people such a state of affairs was absolutely unbearable. Moreover they were weary of wars, crises and political changes; a state not difficult to visualise in the world we live in today. They needed an escape. Almost out of the blue there came a sudden nationwide interest in the folk traditions of their own country. Here at least, was something in which the French could never outshine them.

Producers and Directors suddenly found themselves forced to take an interest in the despised songs and dances of Andalusia as, if nothing else, a commercial proposition. The café, or true born gypsy, ceased to be a parasite. No one knew better than he how to give the public what they wanted, an atmosphere of wine and festivity to take their minds off their disillusionment; a reminder of the gaiety and colour that once was Spain.

The first stage on which the gypsy performed was at the Café Chantant, not unlike the modern night club and cabaret. The owner of the café hired flamenco "cantaors" and "baillores" (singers and dancers). In addition the women artists were required to mingle with the customers between performances and induce them to spend as much money on wines and liqueurs as possible.

The Café Chantant was an immediate success, especially as the entertainment was always primarily flamenco. By the last thirty years of the 19th century cafes chantants were to be found all over Spain based on the models of "Silverio" and "El Burrero" in Seville and the "Café sin Techo" (open air café), "La Loba" and the "Chinitas" at Malaga which remained the most popular.

Naturally many cafes chantants soon realised the advantage of having their own companies and the theatre was not slow in following their example.

The company was called, as it still is, a "Cuadro Flamenco". The complete team consists of singers and dancers of both sexes, guitarists and sometimes bandore and pandore players and "jaleadores". It is the job of these last performers to provide the rhythmic hand clapping, heel beating and encouraging cries of olé! and bravo! without which no flamenco show would be complete.

Today the café chantant is a thing of the past and the Cuadro Flamenco has turned its attention to the theatre and the night club and, in present times, the cinema.

Continued on page 22

Photographs taken by Roy Round in Seville during the Spring Fair.



BALLET GUIDE

Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden

Fri. (Eve) Feb.	17th	<i>Les Sylphides</i> <i>La Peri</i> <i>Checkmate</i>
Sat.(mat)	18th	<i>Les Sylphides</i> <i>La Peri</i> <i>Coppelia, Act III</i>
Mon.(eve)	20th	<i>Tenth Anniversary of the Re-opening of the Royal Opera House</i> <i>The Sleeping Beauty (Revival 1st perf.)</i> (Fonteyn, Somes, Grey, Ashton)
Tues.	21st	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Elvin, Blair, Lindsay, Ashton)</i>
Wed.	22nd	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Grey, Chatfield, Berio- sova, Ashton, Linden, Blair</i>
Thurs.	23rd	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Nerina, Lindsay, Linden, Blair, Powell)</i>
Fri.	24th	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Beroisova, Somes, Drage, Ashton)</i>
Sat.(mat.)	25th	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Fifield, Blair, Linden)</i>
Sat.(eve)	25th	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Fonteyn, Somes, Grey, Ashton)</i>
Mon.	27th	<i>Checkmate</i> <i>The Firebird</i> <i>Les Patineurs</i>
Tues.	28th	<i>Checkmate</i> <i>The Firebird</i> <i>Les Patineurs</i>
Wed.	29th	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Elvin, Blair, Lindsay, Powell)</i>
Thurs. Mar.	1st	<i>Les Patineurs</i> <i>Noctambules (1st perf.)</i> <i>Coppelia (Act III)</i>
Fri.	2nd	<i>Les Patineurs</i> <i>Noctambules</i> <i>Coppelia (Act III)</i>

Sat. (mat)	3rd	<i>Les Sylphides</i> <i>Noctambules</i> <i>The Lady and the Fool</i>
Sat. (eve)	3rd	<i>Les Sylphides</i> <i>Noctambules</i> <i>The Lady and the Fool</i>
Mon.	5th	<i>Ballabile</i> <i>La Peri</i> <i>The Lady and the Fool</i>
Tues.	6th	<i>The Shadow</i> <i>La Peri</i> <i>Homage to the Queen</i>
Wed.	7th	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Fifield, Blair, Linden, Powell)</i>
Thurs.	8th	<i>Le Lac des Cygnes (Grey, Chatfield, Lane, Clayden)</i>
Fri.	9th	<i>The Shadow</i> <i>Noctambules</i> <i>Homage to the Queen</i>
Sat(mat.)	10th	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Fonteyn, Somes, Grey, Ashton, Jackson, Shaw)</i>
Sat.(eve)	10th	<i>The Sleeping Beauty (Nerina, Lindsay, Powell, Linden, Blair)</i>
Mon.	12th	<i>Le Lac des Cygnes (Fonteyn, Somes, Lane.)</i>
Tues.	13th	<i>Scenes de Ballet (Revival 1st perf.)</i> <i>Noctambules</i> <i>Homage to the Queen</i>
Wed.	14th	<i>Les Patineurs</i> <i>Madam Chrysanthème</i> <i>The Lady and the Fool</i>
Thurs.	15th	<i>The Shadow</i> <i>The Firebird</i> <i>Les Patineurs</i>
Fri.	16th	<i>Noctambules</i> <i>Madame Chrysanthème</i> <i>The Firebird</i>
Sat(mat)	17th	<i>Le Lac des Cygnes (Elvin, Blair, Grahame, Park)</i>
Sat(eve)	17th	<i>Le Lac des Cygnes (Jackson. Somes, Lindsay Linden)</i>

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Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet

Feb.	20th	<i>Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton</i>
"	27th	<i>Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham</i>
Mar.	5th	<i>Globe, Stockton-on-Tees</i>
"	12th	<i>Opera House, Manchester</i>
"	19th	<i>Alhambra Theatre, Bradford</i>
"	26th	<i>Theatre Royal, Nottingham</i>

Festival Ballet

Feb.	20th	<i>Regal Cinema, Edmonton</i>
"	27th	<i>Empire Theatre, Liverpool</i>
Mar.	5th	<i>Opera House, Belfast (2 weeks)</i>
"	19th	<i>Her Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen</i>
"	26th	<i>King's Theatre, Glasgow (2 weeks)</i>

Ballet Rambert

Feb.	20th	<i>Royalty Theatre, Chester</i>
"	27th	<i>Palace Theatre, Plymouth</i>
Fortune Theatre		<i>Children's Ballet Matinee, Feb. 18th, 2.30. in aid of Dr. Barnardo's Homes.</i>
Royal Albert Hall		<i>Children of all Nations Cavalcade of Song and Dance (second edition) at the Royal Albert Hall, March 18th, 7.p.m. in aid of the National Spastics Society.</i>

BOOKS

reviewed
by

Pigeon Crowle



Genia Melikova, star of the Marquis de Cuevas' Ballet autographs her photograph for young admirers at the party given at Gilberte Courmand's "La Danse" Library, to present Serge Lido's Album—Ballet No. 5.

Photo : R. Le Duc.

RICHARD BUCKLE

In Search of Diaghilev. By Richard Buckle. (Sidgwick & Jackson, 30s.)

Everyone who enjoyed the Diaghilev Exhibition will welcome this book for in its pages something is recaptured of the wonders of what is now, alas, a splendid memory. The two hundred illustrations are almost certain to contain your favourite of the many treasures that were gathered together, while photographs of the imaginative and beautiful setting will recall what Kochno so rightly described as the house of Diaghilev. The text is lively and amusing, with the feeling for the nicely turned phrase, the evocative description, the word that reaches the heart of the matter, that one expects from this writer. As one follows Richard Buckle on his quest, his *recherche du temps perdu*, and the friends of Diaghilev—Benois, Gontcharova, Grigoriev, Karsavina and so on—are encountered, one can realise something of the terrific magnitude of his task, the frustrations and the triumphs—and one can also read between the lines.

SERGE STRENKOVSKY

The Art of Make-up. By Serge Strenkovsky. (Muller, 22s. 6d.)

Literature on the art of make-up is, on the whole, inadequate, the majority of works are theoretic and based on traditional standards, lacking scientific foundation. The author of this book has been stage director of some of the leading theatres and dramatic schools in Europe and, as a member of the Italian Theatrical Federation, has worked in close contact with Pirandello. Out of his wide experience he has dealt with the theoretical and practical aspects of the subject from every conceivable angle and in great detail. Principles of geometry are constantly used to determine how to make distances look longer or shorter in the proportions of the face, or optical illusions exploited when lines of expression must be changed. It is all most fascinating to the layman but must be invaluable to the professional, amateur or student. There are many photographs as well as drawings and diagrams by the author.

GEORGE BORODIN

The Charm of Ballet. By George Borodin. (Herbert Jenkins, 15s.)

The author of this book sets out to discover why two people can enjoy a ballet and yet have completely different reactions, and on the way he examines the nature of ballet and the legends, false and true, that have grown up around it.

The subject is treated throughout in psychological terms, and while there is no doubting the knowledge and sincerity of the writer, his style is so involved and long winded—fifteen pages, for instance, are occupied in defining the workings of memory—that he wearies the reader and defeats his own purpose. "I have no intention," he tells us, "of firing off all my ammunition in my first salvo." But so many

of the battles have already been fought and decided, while in others Mr. Borodin is so long in coming to grips with the enemy that we lose interest in the outcome and, indeed, wonder why hostilities ever began.

The many photographs by Duncan Melvin are excellent.

RICHARD BUCKLE

Modern Ballet Design. By Richard Buckle. (A. & C. Black, 30s.)

This book contains two hundred and seven photographs, examples of the work of about forty artists who have designed for ballet since the war. It includes such well-established names as Benois (it is, by the way, nearly half a century since he first designed for Diaghilev), Bérard and Hurry, besides those more recently arrived on the scene such as Rowell, Ironside and Sainthill. The text by Richard Buckle is a kind of running commentary and is constructive, evocative and illuminating, though the ground is covered in a rather desultory kind of way, as he himself admits, and one may not always be in agreement. I thought it a pity, for instance, that the only page in colour should be devoted to Craxton's pyjama party for *Daphnis and Chloe* and three pages given to the Lyon's Corner House Picasso of Beaurepaire's *Scènes de Ballet*, though I did not grudge the same number for Derain's enchanting designs for *Mdlle. Angot*. Many, no doubt, will disagree with me.

It is interesting to compare the photographs of a design side by side with that of the finished article on stage—often less effective in realisation and this, one can see, is not always the fault of the workrooms but because the artist has failed to work within the framework of the proscenium arch.

Though I must criticise the general lay-out of the pages, on which there are too many bleak white spaces because text and illustrations have not always been well balanced or pictures sized up properly, this does not detract from the value of the book, for all interested in design for the theatre. Clavé's design for *Los Caprichos* makes a splendid jacket cover.

NADIA CHILKOVSKY

Three Rs for Dancing: Book I. By Nadia Chilkovsky. (Witmark & Sons, New York, \$2.00.)

The first of a series of graded books which have been designed primarily for the purpose of teaching dancing and labanotation simultaneously. No. I is for students aged nine to fifteen and contains a number of simple exercises and studies in various styles (ballet and modern). The music has been especially written by Luigi Zanelli to correspond with the rhythmic patterns of the steps so that exact timing may be the more easily attained.

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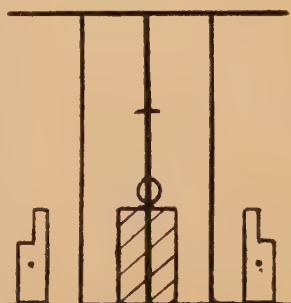


PART TWO

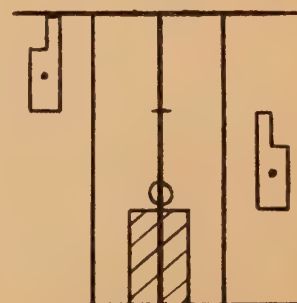
A point which should be made quite clear is that although Labanotation carries the name of its inventor, this by no means implies that it can be used only for the kind of dancing with which Rudolf Laban has been most closely associated. Just as, for instance, Pitman's shorthand can be employed to take down any kind of dictation, Labanotation can in the same way be used for registering every variety of dancing, from Ballet onwards. It is, as its name expressly states, a system of notation, not a dance form.

One advantage the system has over others is that it employs comparatively few symbols. And it is economic in that each symbol within itself tells us the four things we need to know—the part of the body that is moving (by its placing on the vertical staff); the direction of the movement (by its shape); the level (by its shading) and the timing (by its length).

The symbols, it will be seen, analyse movement in terms of its basic elements. Hence the "notes" (movement symbols) can be arranged on the staff to register any combination of these elements. Simultaneous movement is shown by placing the symbols side by side on the staff. In sequential movement each action happens a moment after the one before.



Simultaneous Action



Sequential Action

Last month's notation examples showed the symbols used when the feet are in first position. The same symbols serve for the other two closed positions, third and fifth, but 'pins' are added to show the different relationship of the legs, pointing diagonally in front or back for third position, or directly in front or back for fifth. It is the point of the pin which does the indicating. In second position the right leg is to the right side of the centre line and the left to the left side, so two side symbols are shown in the notation, the point of the triangle indicating right or left. In fourth position supports are forward and back of centre—so forward and backward symbols are used. Forward is shown by having an indicator at the front of the symbol, pointing like a finger in the forward direction. Back is, of course, just the reverse of this.

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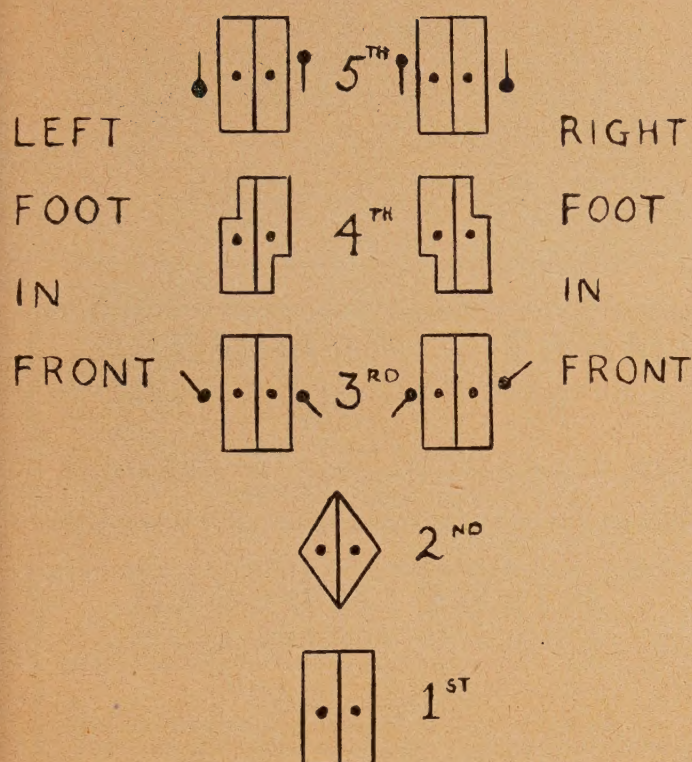
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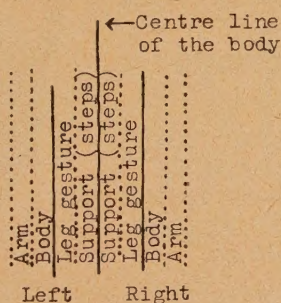
DANCE WITH LABANOTATION

Ann Hutchinson, President of The Dance Notation Bureau in New York, has given "Ballet Today" a series of interviews describing this system of instruction. *Interviewed by ELISABETHE CORATHIEL.*



Positions of the Feet

"Originally", says Ann Hutchinson, "the vertical staff had five lines like a musical staff, but for easier reading it was reduced to three lines, the other being imagined. The movements of the lower body are written within the three-line staff, and those of the upper body outside the staff."



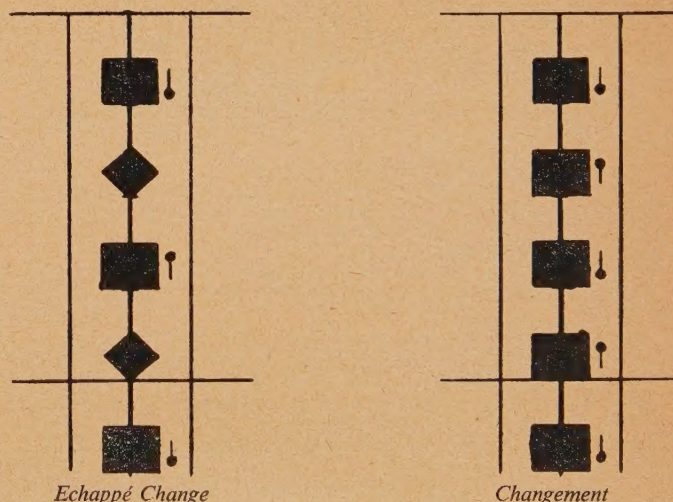
"The centre line represents a line through the centre of the body; everything for the right side is written on the right, and for the left side of the body, on the left. In this way it is very easy to see symmetrical movement or note when one-sided movement is used. Each column in the staff has a particular use. The first column, next to the centre line, is for the support; steps, walking, kneeling, etc., are written there. The next column is for leg gestures—a battement, for instance, or a ronde de jambe. In the third column, just outside the three-line staff, are written the movements of the body, inclining, turning, whatever it is, and, of course, the épaulement. The fourth column from the centre is for the arm, and outside that the movements of the hands are indicated, when needed, and of the head, which is written on the right side. Specific parts of the limbs and body are shown as required."

Experience has shown that students grasp the significance of the shapes on the staff with amazing rapidity, because they are so simple and at the same time graphic. Just as the pianist can glance at a piece of music and tell from the arrangement of the notes the kind of piece it is, so the dancer can look at a sample of notation and at once visualise the dance-movement. "Our one difficulty", says Miss Hutchinson, "is that we cannot dance with a piece of paper in our hand—so we must learn to memorise quickly and translate the symbols back into movement, performing them freely and with the right expression."

In education, it is desirable to teach young children from the very beginning the proper way of reading dance. This should be regarded as an essential step in progress. A mechanical rendering of a dance reconstructed from notation is the teacher's fault—it cannot be blamed upon the notation, any more than one would blame a piece of sheet music for a musician's faulty performance. Everything depends upon how it is used.

"Usually children know right from left when they start playing with the symbols", says Miss Hutchinson, "but if not, notation helps. They learn the difference between weight on both feet or on one. Through the use of the cut-out symbols they explore direction in space, first in a general way (such as running in the direction indicated) then more specifically, discovering the different expression of moving the limbs in the directions stated. Circular patterns, pivoting and so on, come in due course, and when they start more formal training for the specific co-ordination of the body, they see the movement pattern in notation at the same time. There is no hurry. Their dance training will take years, so notation can be picked up little by little as they go along."

The five positions of the feet can be done in plié and relevé, as described in last month's article. This leads into jumps in the five positions, moving from one position to another, as in *échappé sauté* and *changement*. In Labanotation the absence of a symbol in either support column means that you have no support—you go into the air. Thus a space between the symbols indicates the amount of time you are in the air.



The difference between walking, running, leaping, can be clearly shown and this leads to variations on skip and galop patterns which are used to develop a consciousness of space and rhythm, some patterns of which we will discuss in our next interview.

The last of this series will be on *Rhythm and Time Values* and will be published in our next issue.

Flamenco Dancing

Of course, flamenco has been adopted to the requirements of the conventional stage, in many cases unnecessarily so. One can never be completely sure of the authenticity of what one is seeing. Some dance lovers will argue that the importance of authenticity is grossly overestimated. Be that as it may, it is becoming almost impossible to see the genuine article in Spain. Almost the only way to see it is to go to a small country village on the day of their fiesta or into a tavern in some back street on market day after the gypsies have had a good day at the market. This is of course, largely a matter of luck but the visitor who is lucky will see the pure art form being enacted minus any of the trappings which the tourist industry have forced upon it.

Part 3 "The Aesthetic Background" will be in our next issue.



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The title of this picture could well be This is Show Business for the atmosphere of backstage is there in full. Taken by Mike Davis in the dressing room of the corps de ballet during an interval of Where the Rainbow Ends at Festival Hall, it shows pupils from the Italia Conti School. From left to right: Elaine Taylor, Patricia Hayes (standing), Susan Passmore, Wendy Harwood, Christine Daw, Carla Hacke, Diana Berry, Carole Turner and Jacqueline Strasmore. Lending a hand with Jacqueline's hair is Matron, whose jobs are multitudinous, but who, even here, is never in the picture.

ALL THE STARS

Margot Fonteyn
Alicia Markova
Nadia Nerina
Svetlana Beriosova
Violetta Elvin
Elaine Fifield
Rowene Jackson
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